

Historic, archived document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.

DUCK CREEK NEWS

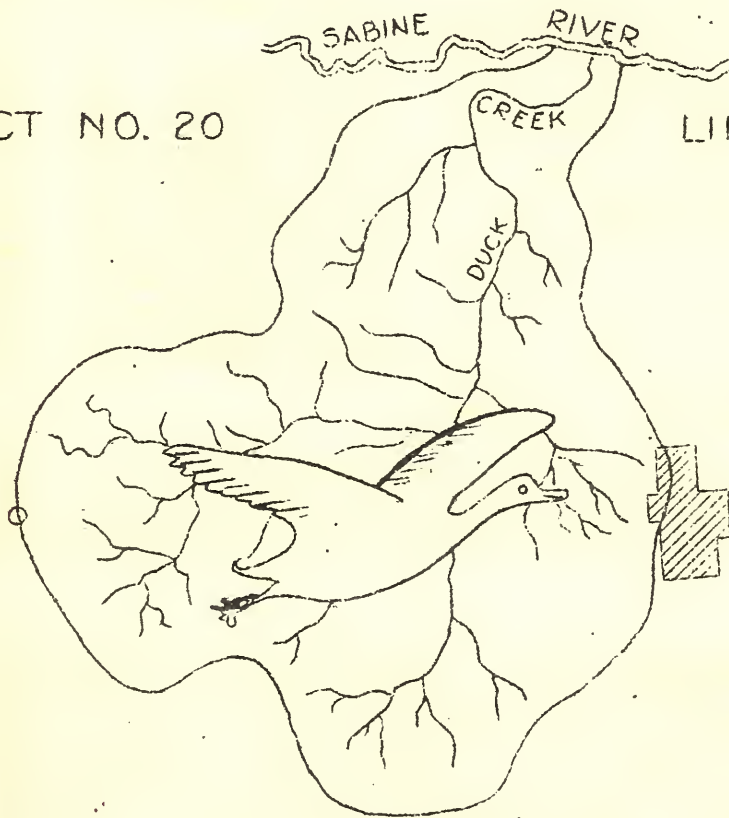
LIBRARY RECEIVED
★ AUG 20 1935
U. S. Department of Agriculture

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
SOIL EROSION SERVICE

PROJECT NO. 20

LINDALE TEXAS

GARDEN VALLEY



LINDALE

○ MT. SYLVAN

AUG 20 1934

This is the first issue of the "Duck Creek News," sent to you by the staff of Duck Creek Soil Erosion Control Project No. 20, at Lindale, Texas. Its purpose is to bring to the farmers of the Duck Creek watershed, and others who are interested in stopping our soil from washing away, timely information about the work being done by the Soil Erosion Service. It will be issued once each month, and will come to you without cost. If, for any reason, you do not receive your copy, or if you know of anyone who should be receiving it and is not, let us know and the name will be placed on our mailing list.

THE DUCK CREEK EROSION CONTROL STAFF

You have already met one or more of the members of the staff when they visited your farm getting information necessary in making our plans of work. We want you to know every one of us, and for this reason the whole staff is listed as follows:

Permanent Staff

L. P. Merrill--Regional Director
L. R. Kent--Chief Clerk
Craig Rosborough--Chief Agronomist
C. B. Spencer--Chief Erosion Specialist
Howard Matson--Agricultural Engineer
R. M. Marshall--Soils Expert
P. H. Walser--Extension Agent
E. T. Nagle--Agronomist
W. A. Porter--Asst. Agronomist
Georgia Boothe--Stenographer

Temporary Staff

M. L. Gary--Assistant, -Permanent Pastures
A. B. Kyle-- " , -Forestry
A. P. Goforth-- " , - "
Harry Porter-- " , -Terrace Construct-
ion
S. J. Mech-- " , -Agr. Engineering
R. F. Creed-- " , - " "
M. A. Kelly-- " , - " "
D. L. Bidwell-- " , - " "
C. B. Eason-- " , - " "
A. N. Whitehead-- " , - " "
A. E. Burgess-- " , -Extension
J. I. Sherman-- " , -Clerk
C. O. Edens-- " , -Agronomy

WHAT IS "SOIL EROSION?"

The term "soil erosion" means the wearing away or loss of soil due to the washing effect of water, or as is the case in sections of the West, the loss of soil due to its being blown away by wind. Soil erosion by water takes two forms, namely;

(a) Sheet erosion; which is the washing away of the soil in layers.

This is the most dangerous form of erosion because the farmer has no means of measuring such losses; they take place over large areas of land, and the farmer is not aware of the damage until clay galls appear in his fields. Sheet erosion is responsible for the "change in color" of the soil which takes place on many of our fields. The top soil is washed away until only a little of the good soil is left mixed with the infertile subsoil. Probably most of our decreasing crop yields are due to sheet erosion.

(b) Gullying; with which everyone is familiar. Gullies not only cut good fields into small patches, making the land hard to cultivate, but they also are largely responsible for the sanding over of good bottom land with the coarse sand, gravel and infertile clays which are exposed as the gully grows deeper. Gullies frequently start from a single heavy rain falling on unprotected sloping land, especially during winter or spring months when the land is being prepared for crops.

We can all see the damage and inconvenience caused by a gully in a field but sometimes we do fail to take into consideration the fact that gullies grow deeper, wider and longer, ruining more land year by year, unless they are controlled.

WHAT IS THE SOIL EROSION SERVICE?

The Soil Erosion Service is a branch of the Department of Interior, organized for the purpose of demonstrating on large areas in various parts of the country, proved, practical methods of controlling erosion. Up to this time twenty-four areas, which include the entire watersheds of as many streams, have been selected. On these areas all the known, proved methods of controlling erosion, including terracing, strip cropping, contour cultivation, establishment of permanent pastures, reforestation and gully control will be used. All such work will be done in a practical manner, so that farmers outside the actual demonstration areas will be able to put the same control methods in practice on their own farms.

WHY WAS THE DUCK CREEK AREA SELECTED?

The twenty-five thousand acre watershed of Duck Creek was selected as a demonstration area because it is representative in types of soil, amount of rainfall, slope of land, extent of erosion, and crops grown, of 33,000,000 acres of land in East Texas, Northwestern Louisiana, Southwestern Arkansas and Southeastern Oklahoma. The work done in the Duck Creek area is to be a demonstration of erosion control which other farmers on rolling sandy land in this region can see and pattern after in controlling erosion on their own farms.

WHY WAS THE SOIL EROSION SERVICE ORGANIZED?

One of the first reports called for by President Roosevelt was on the subject of soil erosion. He had for many years observed the effects of soil washing on the people and communities where it occurred. He had seen farmers struggle unsuccessfully to make a decent living on farms where the fertile topsoil had washed away. He had seen them finally lose hope and abandon their farms when sheet washing and gullies at last made the land too poor to cultivate. He knew that many country communities and small towns have died out because the land would no longer support the population.

From the report which was given President Roosevelt he learned that 35,000,000 acres of American farm land have already been abandoned because of erosion; that erosion is forcing farmers to abandon 100,000 acres each year; that it is costing us, the American people, 400,000,000 dollars each year, due to damage to farm lands, sanding over of rich bottom lands, choking of stream channels and otherwise.

The President recognized the fact that the control of soil erosion is thus one of the most serious problems before the American people, because we depend on the soil for practically everything we eat, wear, or use in our everyday lives. He knew that if erosion was not stopped the same thing would finally happen to the United States that has already happened to thousands of farms and communities; the whole nation would become a vast area of abandoned land, which could not support our civilization.

In order to impress upon the people the absolute necessity of controlling erosion, and to show how it could be done, the Soil Erosion Service was organized.

WHEN WILL FIELD WORK START IN THE DUCK CREEK AREA?

Just as soon as we can get our plans completed. There are close to 300 farms in the area, and we want to have our plans so complete that when we come on your farm, we won't make any mistakes. We know we are undertaking a whole of a job, and we want to do it right--with your cooperation. The economic survey is completed, the soil survey work and mapping is under way, and in a few more days Mr. Rosborough will be around to work out a cropping plan with you. Then as soon as crops are out of the way so we can do a complete job on a farm the work will begin.

WITH WHOM WILL THE SOIL EROSION SERVICE WORK?

The Soil Erosion Service will work with every farmer of the area who will cooperate. We hope to work with every farmer in the Duck Creek watershed, but if any do not wish to work with us, they are under no obligation to do so. In order to make a fair and lasting demonstration of erosion control it must be carried on over a period of at least five years. We are sure that a large majority of the farmers will see the benefits of the program and will give us their whole-hearted cooperation, as farmers are doing in other similar areas.

HOW CAN FARMERS OF THE DUCK CREEK AREA HELP IN THE DEMONSTRATION?

Farmers of the area have a real opportunity to help in putting over a demonstration which will be of immense value to themselves and to other farmers. Honest cooperation with the Soil Erosion Service will mean that our farmers will have a great part in making this one of the most effective, important demonstrations ever made. Control of erosion should have been started just as soon as the land was cleared, but it was not. Now it is a real problem which will be solved only by real work. After all is said and done, the farmers themselves will by the way they cooperate, determine just how complete and lasting and worthwhile the Duck Creek Soil Erosion control demonstration will be.

KEEPING UP WITH THE WORK IN THE DUCK CREEK AREA.

At least once each week you will find one or more articles about erosion control work in your newspaper.

Each Tuesday evening at 8:30 a radio program on work in the area will be broadcast over station K. G. K. B. at Tyler.

14

Your farm papers are also carrying articles on erosion control which will be of interest to you.

EROSION

Hordes of gullies now remind us
We should build our lands to stay,
And, departing, leave behind us
Fields that have not washed away;
When our boys assume the mortgage
On the land that's had our toil,
They'll not have to ask the question:
"Here's the farm, but WHERE'S the
SOIL?"

T.V.A.

